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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/044,206	01/11/2002	Jerome Michael Eldridge	MI22-1914	3666
21567	7590	05/12/2003		
WELLS ST. JOHN ROBERTS GREGORY & MATKIN P.S. 601 W. FIRST AVENUE SUITE 1300 SPOKANE, WA 99201-3828			EXAMINER SCHILLINGER, LAURA M	
			ART UNIT 2813	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 05/12/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)
	10/044,206	ELDRIDGE, JEROME MICHAEL
	Examiner Laura M Schillinger	Art Unit 2813

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 March 2002.
 2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.
 3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) Claim(s) 78-84 is/are pending in the application.
 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
 5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
 6) Claim(s) 78-84 is/are rejected.
 7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
 8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
 10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 11) The proposed drawing correction filed on _____ is: a) approved b) disapproved by the Examiner.
 If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
 12) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 a) All b) Some * c) None of:
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
 * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
 14) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
 a) The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
 15) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____.
 2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
 3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 3 & 5. 6) Other:

DETAILED ACTION

Double Patenting

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 80-84 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 4 of U.S. Patent No. 6140200. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art that to hermetically seal the void region as claimed in the current application because the overlying metal comprising layer would act as such a seal.

In reference to claim 80, Eldridge claims a method comprising:

Providing a substrate (Claim 4, Col.9, line: 7);

Forming a sacrificial mass over the substrate (Claim 4, Col.9, line:8);

Forming a metal comprising layer over the mass (Claim 4, Col.9, line: 9) ; and

Subjecting the mass to conditions which transports a component of the mass into the metal comprising layer to form an alloy, and leaving a hermetically sealed void region between the metal comprising layer and the substrate (Claim 4, Col.9, lines: 10-15).

In reference to claim 81, Eldridge claims wherein less than all of the sacrificial mass is transported to the metal-comprising layer (See claim 7).

In reference to claim 82, Eldridge claims wherein substantially all of the sacrificial mass is transported to the metal comprising layer (See claim 8).

In reference to claim 83, Eldridge claims wherein the metal-comprising layer comprises one or more of vanadium, Ti, Ta, and iron (See claim 9).

In reference to claim 84, Eldridge claims wherein the metal comprising layer comprises one or more of Ti or Ta, wherein the component is carbon and wherein the component is alloyed as one or both of a metal-carbide and a solid solution (See claim 10).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 78-79 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Chiang et al ('548).

In reference to claim 78, Chiang teaches a method comprising:

Providing a substrate (Fig.1 (10));

Forming a sacrificial mass over the substrate (Fig.1 (18));

Forming a layer over the mass (Fig.1 (34)); and

Subjecting the mass to conditions wherein a component of the mass transports from the mass into the layer to form a mixture of the layer and the component (Col.2, lines: 25-35), and wherein transporting the component leaves an enclosed void region between the substrate and the mixture of the layer and the component (Fig.1 (void)).

In reference to claim 79, Chiang teaches wherein the layer comprises silicon nitride (Col.2, lines: 25-30).

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Laura M Schillinger whose telephone number is (703) 308-6425. The examiner can normally be reached on M-T, R-F 7:00-5:00.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Carl W Whitehead, Jr. can be reached on (703) 308-4940. The fax phone numbers

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for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are (703) 308-7722 for regular communications and (703) 308-7722 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 308-0956.

LMS
May 3, 2003



CARL WHITEHEAD, JR.
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 2800